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# The Secret of Happiness

BY RUTH HAWLEY

YOUNG WOMEN'S COMMITTEE  
WOMEN'S BOARDS OF MISSIONS, REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA  
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(This demonstration, written by a member of the Wide Awake Club, the girls' society of the First Reformed Church, Somerville, N. J., was given with much effect by the young women of that church at the annual meeting of the women's auxiliary.)



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NOTE: *Characters* in native costume, to represent Japanese, Chinese, Asiatic Indian, Arabian, Kentucky Mountaineers, Aliens (Italian), American Indian; also an American girl dressed typically; the Spirit of Service with long flowing gray robe; also children, duplicate characters, etc., as may be desired to add to the effect of the presentation. *Place*, an average American drawing room, with table and chairs, etc.

THE GIRL (*seated knitting, rubs her eyes, gets up, walks over to table and picks up a book*)—Oh, this is a miserable day, rainy, nothing to do! I wish the sun would shine. A day like this makes me feel wretchedly. (*Sits down with book, nibbles a candy, and gives the impression of restlessness.*) What is there for a girl to do? I read, then knit, then wander aimlessly about trying to think of something with a little more variety and finally come back to knitting again. This is the fifth sweater I have made for my summer wardrobe. Hm! It will look rather smart with my new white sport skirt Madame is making. My yellow one will be just the thing for the game this Saturday. I hope it will be as exciting this year as it was last. Oh, if Saturday were only here, then I should have something to do! (*Sighs and sits musing.*)

(*Enter the Spirit of Service.*)

SERVICE (*coming over to the girl places her hands on her shoulders*)—My dear little girl, you seem to be very unhappy. Instead of wishing for sunshine why do you not make it for yourself?

THE GIRL—Who are you? You look like a bit of sunshine; and why have you come here to me?

SERVICE—I am the Spirit of Service. Through the last four years I have come into the lives of thousands and thousands of people. Indeed, I have reigned supreme in your hearts. It was I who came to your brother one night two years ago when the freedom and peace of our

beloved country were threatened and it was I who encouraged him and stayed by his side through those long nights on the battle fields of France. Ah, I have indeed been happy for in these four years of self-sacrifice and sorrow I have lived in the souls of men and women as never before!

THE GIRL—How beautiful you are, Spirit of Service! You are lovelier than anyone I have ever seen. Your smile lights up my heart. How I wish that I, too, could give to the world what you have given!

SERVICE (*takes the girl's hands*)—My dear child, what strong, capable hands you have! What lovely bright eyes! What do you do with those hands of yours? What are you doing with the brightness and freshness of your youth?

THE GIRL (*looking solemnly at her hands*)—Why, I can—*knit*. I made all brother's socks and sweaters and things before he went to France.

SERVICE—Yes, and what do you do now that the war is over?

THE GIRL—Well, you see, while the war was going on we had no pleasures. We did not feel like playing then; but now I have been having a glorious time. Last week, this week, next week,—all the time—Oh! (*closes her eyes and with much exuberance, says*) I have just revelled in the joyousness and pleasure of it all!

SERVICE—I understand, and of course it is right that you should have your pleasures,—you with your vivacity and love of companionship. But how unhappy you were a moment ago, when that excitement had ceased and you were dependent upon something else for amusement! Let me tell you a secret. True happiness lies in accepting me,—the happiness that brings peace at night when you lie down for sleep and the consolation that you have brightened some other's life during that day. Oh, you American girls, and women with your courage, your brightness, your freedom, and your capabilities, widen your horizons! So much depends upon you. And, little girl, there is much for you to do if you will only find it.

THE GIRL—I really want to be helpful, but where shall I find this happiness?



SERVICE—I will show you. (*Goes to back of stage, draws aside a curtain, and a Chinese girl enters, bows before the girl.*)

CHINESE—There are thousands of Chinese just like me who are longing to have you share some of your radiance and happiness. In our land we women count as nothing. We are ignorant and kept down by foolish prejudices and are allowed none of the privileges that you are. Oh, to be free like you! Will you not come to us and help us? Will you not tell more of us of the hope your loving Christ and Master holds out to everyone?

(*The girl looks questioningly at Spirit of Service.*)

(*Chinese girl steps to one side and takes her place at the left.*)

SERVICE (*turning to the American girl*)—You see, there is one way to be truly happy. (*Service draws curtain and American Indian enters.*)

AMERICAN INDIAN—Many years ago the pale faces came to our beautiful land and now there is little left for us and only a few of my people living to enjoy it. Since the very beginning of our tribes, our customs and our ways have been so different from yours, but our hearts are good and we are willing and eager to walk the “Jesus road” if you will only teach us, fair-skinned sister. (*Pauses a moment, turns, passes down to take place by Chinese girl.*)

(*Spirit of Service opens the curtain and Italian peasant enters.*)

ITALIAN—You do not have to come-a to Italia, because-a Italia come-a to America. We work-a hard, vera hard, but-a we love-a America. It-a is the “land of the free-a,” but we want-a to know-a the good-a way. We want-a to learn more of the beautiful-a—ah—so beautiful-a spirit that shines—ah, so bright in the hearts of the Americana people. Tell us of the Christ and the right-a way to live.

THE GIRL (*turning to the Spirit of Service*)—Is it true that these people really want someone to help them? Surely, if they long to be taught there must be some way of giving them their wish!

(*Spirit of Service assents and ushers in Japanese woman with small child.*)

JAPANESE (*bowing very low before the girl*)—Now is the

time, Oh, lovely golden-haired lady, when we need you most. My beautiful Japan, so full of opportunities, such a promising land of the future, pleads for you, strong men and women of the Western world. Rapidly my country is taking its place among the first nations of the earth and that our government and our people may have the right principles to build on, I beg you to help us to make our nation a Christian one. We need your efforts and enthusiasm here in *this* land of America, too, while we are here for a time, as we need you across the sea in my own country of Japan. We need you all, your work, your Message—we need *even you!*

THE GIRL—Need me?

(*Enter an Indian woman with her little girl, a child widow.*)

WOMAN OF INDIA—Perhaps you do not know who I am. I am a native of India and not long ago one of your noble American women came to me to tell me of the Christ. Since then my life has changed and as the Christian Bible woman came to teach me more about Him, my life became sunshiny and I tried to tell others. My little girl is a widow and because she is, she is an outcaste and is made to feel that no one loves her. I could not have anything to do with her either until I became a Christian. Then I realized I must not forsake my child, but there is so much work to be done to break down such burdensome and ancient customs that we need just such strong, helpful young women as you. Will you not go back with me to bring the Light to my people?

(*Enter Arabian woman.*)

ARABIAN—I have come to speak for the women of Arabia. Through the wonderful work that so many men and women of your country have done for us we have been helped and uplifted. Your doctors have ministered to our sick and the teachers and visitors to our homes have taught us something different from that we have ever known before, but we beg to know more of the wonderful love and compassion of Christ and will you not send us more doctors and nurses to heal our broken bodies? Oh, we need you so very much!

(*Enter a group of Mountaineers.*)



MOUNTAIN MOTHER—We bin a-travellin' a fur piece from our house to the "college." I aimed to git here by las' sun down but hit be nigh on to thirty mile, hit be, down to the settlement, an' our ole nag went plumb lame, she did, and we stopped the night by Possum Run, we did. I be real glad the doctor haint gone back to the Blue Grass 'cause I'm a-settin' a heap a store by him a-fixin' my eyes, and the childern here wants to git book larnin' at the college. Oh, to think you good people have brung so much larnin' an' good to we-uns in the school. Wa-al I'll be a gittin' along 'gainst the sun gits high. I'd thank you to pass the word along when there's a place fur the childern. I thought they could stay but there ain't no place fur 'em, they say.

MOUNTAIN CHILD—Maw, bean't I a-gon-ter stay at the college? I want-a be a up-and-doin'-in like Sige, and there hain't no chanct fur me ef I can't git no larnin'. Oh, but I want-a stay!

THE GIRL—Ah, now I see the land of happiness! Somewhere, away out there, is someone calling for me, or at my very door, I shall find some work to do. Can it be that I have something worthwhile to give to the world? Is it possible that I ever thought that I did not believe in missions or educating all these people less fortunate than I? Why, it means the progress of the world, the betterment of humanity. Now, I know, Spirit of Service, what it is that makes you so beautiful and makes that lovely soft light in your eyes. It is the Spirit of the Christ. I, too, shall try with my two strong hands and a willing heart to follow you and help some one to know more of Him. (*Kneels before Spirit of Service.*)

SERVICE—I would crown you with all blessings, dear child. You will, indeed, be happy, giving some share of yourself, your time, and your efforts. I shall be by you always to encourage you, and you may need me, for you are now leagued with me in the great League for Service.

(*All stand grouped in large semicircle with the girl in the foreground and Spirit of Service hovering near.*)

SING TOGETHER, *League Hymn to Tune: "O Zion, Haste"* or sing, "O Zion, Haste."

